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ABSTRACT

This document is intended to answer the questions most frequently asked by vocational instructional program (VIP) advisory committee members. The foreword states that VIP advisory committees are being promoted and enhanced because studies have found that one of the most common characteristics associated with high quality vocational education programs is their close tie to the communities they serve. Other sections of the document describe the purpose of VIP advisory committees, the kinds of individuals who serve on committees, what their roles are, why committees are necessary, how effective they are, what their functions are, what they are responsible for, how often they meet, how long committee members serve, and where to get further information. The back cover of the document contains a graphic that illustrates vocational-technical education private sector cooperation. (CML)

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VOCATIONAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

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MEMBER'S GUIDE

FOREWORD

Recent studies have shown that the overall quality of vocational-technical education varies from program to program. These studies have also found that one of the most common characteristics associated with "quality programs" is their close tie to the community.

To improve the quality of vocational-technical education, a greater effort must be made to form a stronger partnership between these programs and the workplace. Local vocational advisory committees are one of the most effective ways to develop this partnership.

The National Alliance of Business, the White House Office of Private Sector Initiatives, and others have called for increased private sector participation in and recognition of local vocational advisory committees. With this renewed interest, local advisory committees are being enhanced and promoted as **Vocational Instructional Program (VIP) Advisory Committees**.

This guide is written for **you**, a VIP advisory committee member. It answers the most frequently asked questions about VIP Advisory Committees:

- What are they?
- What are their roles?
- Why are they necessary?
- How effective are they?
- What are their functions?
- What are my responsibilities?
- How often do they meet?
- How long will I serve?

WHAT ARE THEY?

The principle purpose for VIP advisory committees is to promote greater cooperation between vocational-technical education and the private sector in preparing individuals for employment, promoting quality vocational-technical education, and making the vocational-technical education system more responsive to the labor market.

VIP advisory committees are made up mostly of private sector members who have volunteered their time, talent, and knowledge to help strengthen and modernize vocational-technical education. These committees usually serve a specific vocational-technical education program or service at the secondary, postsecondary, or adult level. These programs and services include:

- Agriculture
- Career Guidance
- Consumer and Homemaking
- Health Occupations
- Industrial Arts
- Marketing
- Occupational Home Economics
- Office
- Special Needs Services
- Specialized Vocational Programs or Projects
- Technical Occupations
- Trade and Industrial Occupations

WHAT ARE THEIR ROLES?

VIP advisory committees have three major roles. They are to **advise**, **assist**, and provide **support and advocacy** for quality vocational-technical education. It is through these roles that VIP advisory committees work with instructors and administrators to initiate policies, procedures, and methods that help strengthen and modernize vocational-technical education. VIP advisory committees have no administrative or legislative authority.

Jobs and job requirements are constantly changing due largely to the rapid growth of science and technology. The success of any vocational-technical education program depends on how well it meets the needs of the community while also meeting the needs and interests of students. Business and community leaders have a shared responsibility in defining their needs, assisting in establishing realistic committee goals, and making appropriate recommendations.

By becoming more aware of these needs, instructors and administrators can better respond by providing the appropriate programs and services that will assist in meeting those needs. Through the VIP advisory committee process, a working relationship is developed to better serve the interests of both the vocational-technical education student and the community.

WHY ARE THEY NECESSARY?

HOW EFFECTIVE ARE THEY?

Improving the quality of vocational-technical education can be directly linked to the degree of involvement, participation, and commitment by VIP advisory committees. The attitude and actions of vocational-technical education teachers, administrators, and VIP advisory committee members are critical to the effectiveness, value, and success of the committee. Unless these individuals truly believe in the concept of advisory committees and are willing to work cooperatively for the betterment of vocational-technical education, it will be difficult for the committee to be effective. Conversely, the VIP advisory committee that is organized, takes charge, keeps the committee's purpose in mind, and expects results can be of extreme value with only a small amount of effort.

The VIP advisory committee should be directed by an annual, written program of work that reflects a consensus of the committee on the needs of the program and the requirements of the business community. With this program of work, VIP advisory committees can maximize their effectiveness by focusing on activities that will improve the quality of vocational-technical education.

WHAT ARE THEIR FUNCTIONS?

Each VIP advisory committee develops its own program of work based on the needs of the program served. This guide outlines nine major functions the committee may want to consider as they plan their program of work. In addition, there are a number of activities that relate specifically to each function. These functions and activities are not all-inclusive and should only be viewed as possible items for consideration. Committee members may also wish to consider other functions and activities.

• **Community relations activities**

- Increase community awareness of vocational-technical education through newspaper, radio, and TV.
- Present programs to civic and service groups.
- Establish awards programs to recognize outstanding students, teachers, and community leaders.
- Obtain contributions to promote programs.
- Obtain media coverage for special events.
- Participate in and promote special school events.
- Provide information at school board meetings.
- Assist in developing and carrying out a local marketing plan for vocational-technical education.
- Set up and support a scholarship program.

• **Curriculum activities**

- Identify and verify job tasks.
- Compare content of program with job tasks.
- Review instructional materials for technical accuracy.
- Assist in obtaining instructional materials.
- Recommend equipment and supplies.
- Recommend basic skills curriculum content.

- Recommend safety policies.
- Provide equipment and facilities for specialized training needs.

- **Community resource activities**

- Identify community resource people.
- Provide tours and field trip experiences.
- Provide speakers.

- **Recruitment activities**

- Assist in reviewing teacher selection criteria.
- Assist in recruiting new staff.
- Assist in recruiting potential students.

- **Student organization activities**

- Assist in developing competitive skill events.
- Judge competitive skill events.
- Sponsor student organization activities.
- Sponsor or collect contributions of equipment and supplies for skill events.
- Arrange for display space to promote student organizations and special events.

- **Job placement activities**

- Organize employer/student conferences.
- Notify teachers of job openings for students.
- Provide students with cooperative training sites.
- Promote potential cooperative training sites with other employers.
- Assist students in developing interviewing skills.
- Recommend employability skills curriculum content.
- Conduct occupational surveys.
- Hire vocational-technical graduates.

- **Staff development activities**

- Provide inservice activities on current methods and processes for instructors.
- Provide skilled technicians to supplement teacher's experience.
- Provide summer or part-time employment experience to instructors for technical upgrading.
- Support participation of instructors in technical workshops or factory schools.

- **Legislative activities**

- Talk to legislators about needs of vocational-technical education.
- Provide tours for legislators.
- Promote legislative support.

- **Program review activities**

- Review program goals and objectives.
- Participate on program evaluation teams.
- Compare program accomplishments with program objectives.
- Compare student performance standards to business/industry standards.
- Review adequacy of facility as a training site.
- Evaluate quality and quantity of graduates and job placements.
- Make recommendations for program improvement.
- Give periodic reports to administration or school board.

WHAT ARE MY RESPONSIBILITIES?

A successful VIP advisory committee is one that plans and carries out a program of work. Members must be willing to attend and participate in meetings. Committee members have the responsibility to advise, assist, and support activities designed to strengthen and modernize vocational-technical education. It is important that members:

- Attend and participate in all meetings.
- Suggest and develop agenda items prior to meetings.
- Help to determine committee goals and objectives and ways to achieve these.
- Become familiar with the educational system and how vocational-technical education fits into the overall educational structure.
- Respect the rights and opinions of other committee members.
- Accept committee assignments.
- Decline participation when a conflict of interest is possible.

HOW OFTEN DO THEY MEET?

Each VIP advisory committee sets the number of times it will meet each year. This is determined largely by the scope of the committee's program of work. Some committees may meet two or three times a year to carry out one or two activities, while others may meet more often and carry out a variety of committee activities.

HOW LONG WILL I SERVE?

A term of membership is decided by each committee, in accordance with the existing school/institution policy. A three-year term is suggested, with reappointment as an option. The benefit of having one-third of the members change each year is that it provides for new ideas and a smooth operation for the committee.

For additional information on VIP advisory committees, contact:

Your School or College Administrator,

Council on Vocational Education

P.O. Box 1373

Bismarck, ND 58502-1373

(701) 224-2080, or

State Board for Vocational Education

State Capitol — 15th Floor

Bismarck, ND 58505

(701) 224-3180

This VIP advisory committee member's guide was developed by Dr. Larry Barnhardt, Executive Director of the North Dakota Council on Vocational Education, in cooperation with the State Board for Vocational Education and the North Dakota Council of Local Administrators. The primary responsibility of the Council on Vocational Education is to advise the Governor, the Governor's Employment and Training Forum, the State Board for Vocational Education, and the business community on policies and initiatives that should be undertaken to strengthen and modernize vocational-technical education.

A special thanks is given to all the State Councils on Vocational Education for sharing information on their efforts to expand local participation in vocational-technical education. Particular thanks go to the Alaska, Colorado, and Washington councils for permission to utilize their material as a model in the development of this guide.

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February 1988

FURTHER INFORMATION

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CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEES

A KEY TO GREATER VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL EDUCATION / PRIVATE SECTOR COOPERATION

